

June 3, 2009

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 1385, the Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act. I want to thank my colleague from Virginia (Mr. *Moran*) for, again, introducing this bill. Similar legislation passed this body by voice vote in the 110th Congress, but it was never acted on in the Senate.

Two years ago, Virginia and the Nation celebrated the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, the first permanent English settlement in North America. Jamestown is the cornerstone of our great Republic, and its success relied heavily on the help of the indigenous people of Virginia. Virginia's Native Americans played a critical role in helping the first settlers of Jamestown survive the harsh conditions of the New World.

After the Jamestown colony weathered its first few years in the New World, the colony expanded, and the English pushed further inland, but the same Native Americans who helped those first settlers were coerced and were pushed from their land without compensation. Treaties, many of which precede our own Constitution, were often made in an effort to compensate the Virginia Native Americans, but as history has shown, these treaties were rarely honored or upheld.

Like many other Native Americans, the Virginia Indian tribes were marginalized from society. They were deprived of their land, prevented from getting an education, and they were denied a role in our society. Virginia's Native Americans were denied their fundamental human rights and were denied the very freedoms and liberties enshrined in our own Constitution.

Mr. Chairman, the bill will finally grant Federal recognition to the Chickahominy, to the Eastern Chickahominy, to the Upper Mattaponi, to the Rappahannock, to the Monacan Indian Nation, and to the Nansemond tribes. H.R. 1385 will ensure the rightful status of Virginia's tribes in our national history. Federal recognition will provide housing and educational opportunities for those who cannot afford it. Federal recognition will also promote the tribal economic development that will allow Virginia's tribes to become self-sufficient. These new opportunities will allow Virginia's tribes to flourish culturally and economically, which will lead to a brighter future for a whole new generation. The Virginia tribes have waited far too long for Federal recognition.

Again, I want to thank my colleague from Virginia (Mr. *Moran*) for his excellent leadership on this important issue. I urge my colleagues to support the bill.